

Sonography Canada Information Bulletin

2 June 2014

Vascular Competencies of Canadian Registered Sonographers.

In 2013, Sonography Canada, with active participation from sonographers and employers across Canada, completed a revalidation of the National Competency Profiles (NCP) whose primary purpose is to set standards for education and certification. The NCP lists the competencies that are expected at entry-to-practice of the three certification categories of sonographers: Canadian Registered Generalist Sonographer (CRGS), Canadian Registered Cardiac Sonographer (CRCS) and Canadian Registered Vascular Sonographer (CRVS). Several significant changes resulted from this revalidation process. First was the definition of an entry-level sonographer. As taken from NCP 5.0, the following points define an entry-level sonographer:

- Performs relevant competencies in a manner consistent with generally accepted standards in the profession, independently, and within a reasonable timeframe in routine situations.
- Anticipates what outcomes to expect in a given situation and responds appropriately, selecting and performing competencies in an informed manner.
- Recognizes unusual, difficult to resolve and complex situations which may be beyond her/his capacity.
- Takes appropriate and ethical steps to address these situations, which may include consulting with others, seeking supervision or mentorship, reviewing literature or documentation, or referring the situation to a more experienced sonographer.

The second addition to the NCP was the definition of competence of a sonographer. As defined in the NCP:

- Competence refers to the ability of a professional to function safely, effectively and ethically. The competence of sonographers – and the competence of other health care professionals – is crucial to patient well-being. However, it is well established that competence is *developmental* (it evolves over the span of a person's career), *impermanent* (knowledge and skills that are not regularly utilized are lost) and *context-specific* (competence is not measurable in the absence of a specific practice situation).
- Competence is enabled by the possession of *competencies*. We define a competency as *a job task that can be performed with a specified level of proficiency*.

What has not changed is the certification categories of sonographers. According to the NCP, there is overlap between the vascular procedures that can be performed by a Generalist sonographer (CRGS) and those that could be performed by the dedicated vascular sonographer

(CRVS). The table below clarifies the procedures that can be performed by a CRGS Registered Sonographer versus those that can be performed by a CRVS Registered Sonographer.

VASCULAR EXAMS: CRGS vs CRVS

√ = entry level proficiency	Canadian Registered Generalist Sonographer CRGS	Canadian Registered Vascular Sonographer CRVS
Carotid duplex – extra cranial	√	√
Intracranial (TCD)		√
Lower Extremity Venous for DVT	√	√
Lower Extremity Venous for Incompetence		√
Upper Extremity Venous for DVT	√	√
Lower Extremity Arterial – Duplex		√
Lower Extremity Arterial – Indirect Testing		√
Upper Extremity Arterial		√
Abdominal Duplex – Portal / Liver for Thrombus	√	√
Abdominal Duplex – TIPS		√
Abdominal Duplex – Mesenteric vessels		√
Abdominal Duplex – Renal		√
Abdominal Iliac veins – for extension of LE DVT	√	√
Lower Extremity Grafts and Stents		√

Note: bolded competencies are applicable to both CRGS and CRVS holders

If you have any further questions or require clarification of any points, please do not hesitate to contact Sonography Canada at info@sonographycanada.ca . Also, a copy of NCP 5.0 is available under the Resources tab on our website www.sonographycanada.ca .

Regards,



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